

A very warm October in Des Moines

Jim Lee, National Weather Service

The month of October saw persistently warmer than normal temperatures across much of Iowa, including at Des Moines where the warmest day was the 17th. Both the high temperature (87 degrees) and low temperature (64 degrees) broke daily records. The 87 degree reading was also the warmest on any October day since 2006.

The average temperature for the month was 59.7 degrees, making this the warmest October in 45 years (since 1971) and the 10th-warmest on record going back to 1879. The lowest temperature recorded during the month was 33 degrees on the 13th, making this only the 11th out of 138 Octobers on record (8%) in which no freeze was recorded. Since 1973 this was only the third October without a freeze, the others being 1998 and 2015.

Warmer than normal temperatures are expected to continue into November and in fact, the lowest temperature forecast for Des Moines in the next seven days (through the 8th) is 45 degrees. With no freeze expected during that time, we will be in the top three latest dates on record for the first freeze of the fall season. The only other years in which no freeze occurred by November 8th were 1882 (first freeze on the 11th) and 2015 (first freeze on the 13th). Remarkably, this means that the “latest first freeze” record that was set in 1882 and not broken until last year (133 years later) could be broken again for the second consecutive year.